

# Faith Matters

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November 6, 2016  
Wonderful Mercy Church



# Faith Connects Us to the Invisible World of God

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- ▶ The world says seeing is believing; the Bible says first we believe, then we will see
- ▶ **Psalm 27:13** NKJV  
“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.”
- ▶ “That which keeps us from losing heart is not what we see but what we believe.” [Derek Prince, *Faith to Live By*, p.11]



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- ▶ **John 11:40** NKJV  
“Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?’”
- ▶ Jesus and Thomas after resurrection
  - ▶ Thomas: “I won’t believe it unless I see” [Jn. 20:25]
  - ▶ Jesus: “Blessed are those who believe without seeing” [Jn. 20:29 NLT]



# What Is Faith?

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“Faith is a settled confidence that something in the future—something that is not yet seen but has been promised by God—will actually come to pass because God will bring it about. Thus biblical faith is not blind trust in the face of contrary evidence, not an unknowable ‘leap in the dark’; rather, biblical faith is a confident trust in the eternal God who is all-powerful, infinitely wise, eternally trustworthy —



# What Is Faith?

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“— the God who has revealed himself in his word and in the person of Jesus Christ, whose promises have proven true from generation to generation, and who will ‘never leave nor forsake’ his own.” [ESV Study Bible]



# What Is Faith?

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“Faith... is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God; it kills the old Adam and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, it is a living, busy, mighty thing, this faith... Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times.



# What Is Faith?

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“This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures; and this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith.” [Martin Luther, Preface to *Romans*]



# What Is Faith?

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- ▶ Faith is believing that what God says and who God is, is the most real thing



# Faith Gives Its Attention to God in Three Essential Ways

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## ▶ **Proverbs 4:20-22** NKJV

“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. <sup>21</sup> Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; <sup>22</sup> For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.”



# Faith Gives Its Attention to God in Three Essential Ways

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- ▶ Listens with an attentive ear: *incline your ear to my sayings* (v. 20)
- ▶ Sees with undistractable eyes: *do not let them depart from your eyes* (v.21)
- ▶ Guards, stores up with a tenacious heart: *keep them in the midst of your heart* (v.21)



# Faith Increases God's Pleasure

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▶ **Hebrews 11:6** NIV / PASSION/ MESSAGE

“And without faith it is impossible to please God\*, for we come to God in faith knowing that he is real\* and that he cares enough to respond to those who seek him\*.”



# Faith Increases God's Pleasure

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- ▶ Faith is an indicator of our love relationship with God
- ▶ He loves faith, not because it's a badge of spiritual accomplishment but because it opens the door for us, as children, to receive the love of our Father



# My Father and Me





# This Is Faith

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- ▶ Forget the rushing waters. Forget all the voices saying it can't be done. Forget all the logical reasons telling you it'd be better to play it safe.
- ▶ Stake everything on the word of the one you know to be true, the one you know to be real
- ▶ “Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times.” [Martin Luther, Preface to *Romans*]



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- ▶ Circumstances and results do not rule sons and daughters because we get our news from the Father first, not from CNN or Fox News
- ▶ If you get your news primarily from these outlets and your reality is shaped by their reports, your faith will become fainter and fainter
- ▶ One of the questions of faith is: who are we hearing from first and foremost?



# Faith Matters

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- ▶ Faith not only blesses and protects us, it increases God's pleasure
- ▶ Faith is believing that what God says and who God is, is the most real thing
- ▶ Oh, the pleasure it gives him when we have to bet on something and we go all in on him



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